

BLAMES LOWER WAGES FOR PRESENT-DAY CRIMES

Craze for Luxurious Living Also Held Accountable by Prison Governors.

MEN, WOMEN, BOYS AND GIRLS English Heads of Jails Deny Spirit of Lawlessness Acquired by Men on Military Service Is Responsible for Increase of Prisoners.

(By Associated Press.) LONDON, Dec. 24.—Lower wages and a craze for luxurious living are held accountable by English prison governors for many present-day crimes, in a report made by them to the Home Office.

Although crime has dwindled considerably during the past twenty years, the number of prisoners for the year 1920-21 was 43,712, or 9,925 more than in the previous year. The report, however, states that "so small an increase in a year in which there has been much unemployment and industrial unrest is noteworthy."

The governor of Durham Prison says: "A new stamp of offender has sprung into existence. Men and women of respectable antecedents and parents, in regular employment and in no respect associated with the criminal class, are taking to serious crime with astounding facility."

Blames the Wages. The suggestion that a spirit of lawlessness acquired by men while on military service is responsible for this is rejected by the governor, on the ground that in equal proportion to men are the offenders. His explanation is that high wages, once easily earned and more easily spent, are now not obtainable.

"Men and women, boys and girls," his report states, "have all got used to big money, out of all proportion to the slight effort necessary to obtain it," and he continues: "The economic readjustment of the past year has created a number of discontented, reckless people, who do not realize that they have been living in an artificial wage market, and unconsciously resent the changed conditions of supply and demand, work and play. Money they must have to create the further amusements to which they have become accustomed, so they steal, pilfer and loaf."

Auto Thefts Increase. The governor of Shrewsbury Prison calls attention to the prevalence of thefts on railways and elsewhere, often by men with excellent military service records, and receiving high wages.

A big increase in automobile thefts is mentioned by the governor of Wandsworth Prison. It is proposed shortly to introduce recreation classes in male convict prisons and make it possible for convicts to earn by good conduct and industry the privilege of classes for reading, recitations, lectures and music.

MOSCOW THREATENS TO BE LEASED PRIVATELY

MOSCOW, Dec. 24.—The Moscow Soviet has announced that the Musical Drama Theater, the Lutetia Music and two other theaters which the local city government has supported will be leased to private concessionaires and has asked Russian theatrical managers to submit proposals for taking over the theaters and operating them as private enterprises.

This is in accordance with the general policy of the Moscow Soviet to follow the example of the central government and unload responsibilities which have been of too great a tax on its bread supply, fuel supply and power of organization.

RHINELANDERS LIKE AMERICAN CHOP SUEY

(By Associated Press.) COBLENZ, Dec. 24.—American "chop suey" has been introduced to the Rhinelanders—and they like it!

The chop suey idea was conceived by an American soldier—Walter E. Smith, who opened a shop when his enlistment expired, after fifteen years in the army.

German didn't pay much attention to the little cafe at first, but curiosity got the best of them at last and finally they began patronizing the place and the food, served with Chinese trimmings, is quite popular now with the native men and women.



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OLD SCROOGE'S FRIENDS HERE SAY HE IS BACK ON EARTH

See Christmas Spirit of Dickens' Famous Character in Stream of Gifts That Go Out to Poor as Yuletide Season Comes.

By Harry Tucker.

Ebenezer Scrooge has been most picturesquely referred to for more than fifty years as the original "hard-bulled egg"; the father and progenitor of all the multitude of tightwads now extant; the miserly model for skinflints of the present day, and the original of the bird who would extract the penny from the optic of the departed citizen.

Ebenezer, it is rumored, could see a farthing at a distance of 1,000 feet without the aid of a spotlight. And, as was said by a distinguished speaker at a recent meeting of the Richmond First Club, the farthing was "invented" as the canny Scot might distinguish himself in works of charity. Old Scrooge, it is said, had the first farthing he ever earned, and he had gradually accumulated many farthings originally earned by others. He had a sharp nose for business, and he was keen on percentage. It is said on good authority that Ebenezer Scrooge could take a sovereign out to the Bank of England and by merely walking through the front door and out the back raise its value 100 per cent.

Coal Dealers Not His Friends. This well-known capitalist of the Victorian age was not a friend of Standard Oil, for he never worked after the sun went down, nor did he use lights above the one-randle power. Coal dealers were not friendly with him. One ton of coal (full weight) ran him an entire season, for he was keen on keeping his shrewd

even upon his clerk and private secretary, one Bob Cratchit, and was unto the luckless Robert if more than one lump of anthracite hit the grate at any one time.

It is reported, doubtlessly true, that Mr. Scrooge had a little cred which read like this: "I believe in the humanity of the burden of wealth upon the possession of wealth. I believe I may be able to the better take care of and preserve it myself. I believe the average mortal would squander and waste the sinews of humanity, and therefore, in the interests of humanity, I delegate myself to relieve all others of the burden." That he was a success is proven by history, as recorded by Charles Dickens. Mr. Dickens said he was worse than a hard-bulled egg. The heart, within him, says Mr. Dickens, was dead as a coffin nail. "And that is about the dearest piece of ironmongery there is."

Why Pick on Old Men?

Why, after full consideration is given every angle of the case, should the Victorian narrator of the various outstanding incidents in the career of Ebenezer Scrooge have pictured him as an old gentleman of sinister countenance, with a few straggling hairs on his high-browed head? Why pick on the old men? Santa Claus is an old man; George Washington was an old man; Napoleon might have been an old man if he hadn't been foolish in his youth; Alexander

the Great might have grown aged had he seen the handwriting on the wall in time; Lloyd George is not a young man; Colonel "Doc" Welsh is an old man, yet denies it; Josephus Shelton, expert on gas, is fast growing into an old man; Rockefeller is old; so is Henry Ford. Why should old Ebenezer Scrooge have been centered upon, when there were just as many young tightwads in the Victorian era? And, as for that, there are some in the Harding era.

"But," said Jeter Jones, in discussing the cause and effect of the story of Scrooge & Marley, "I can't see why all this knocking of Ebenezer Scrooge. What would have become of Tiny Tim if it hadn't been for old Scrooge? Wasn't it Ebenezer who bought that big, juicy turkey for Christmas morning and sent it post-haste to Bob Cratchit's cottage, and wasn't he the old duck who relieved the worries of the benevolent gentlemen who were searching for funds to fill the stockings and stomachs of the poor? If it wasn't, who was it? The moneybags in old Scrooge's cellar were happily opened, and the gold flowed freely, and a lot of people were made happy. Now what I say is, let some of the young Scrooges and the old Scrooges as well, keep their moneybags open all winter. There are plenty of Cratchits and Tiny Tims, right here to be looked after, and let us hope Scrooge & Co. may be on the job."

Saved Money for Spendthrifts. "I never could see why the world shunned old Scrooge," Henry Schwazschell averred. "He was a good treasurer for the spendthrifts. He saved their money for them and then turned it loose where it would do the most good. All he needed was a little awakening. And Charlie

Dickens just gave him a little punch in the ribs. That was all that was needed to get the old fellow to work. Let's slam some of our tightwads in the ribs, or bump them over the head, and see what a brighter New Year we will have here and hereabouts. Hurrah, for old Scrooge!"

"I ain't ever met this fellow Scrooge, who is so much talked about," declared "Pop" Tate, balliff in Police Court. "But if he is anything what they say, he must be a bird. I'd like to of had the chance he had to save up a lot of coin. And I'd give the 'Associated Charities' some, the Salvation Army a lot, and then I'd send some cheer down to the jail, where that bunch of unucky fellows go from here. Them guys certainly need encouragement. You can't save a hungry man by sending him nothing but a tract. He's got to have physical sustenance as well as spiritual."

"If some people would save their lucre," commented W. Tacumseh Dabney, "they would have more to use in helping their fellow-men. I save about two-thirds of my income every year, and at Christmas turn it loose in various channels leading to the Associated Charities, the Little Crippled Children's Hospital, and such places, and then I begin saving all over again. Old man Scrooge took life too seriously. He missed many things."

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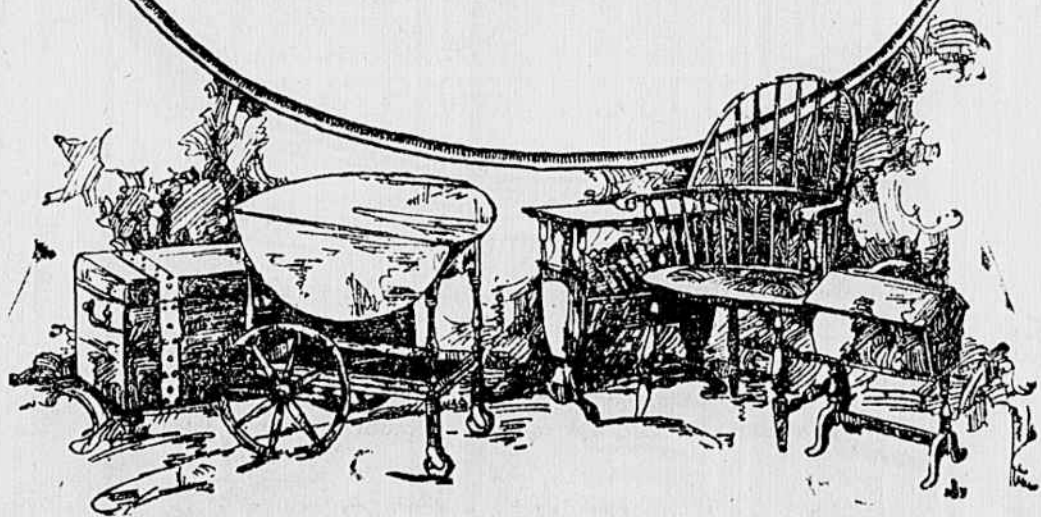


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A Christmas Message

Christmas, on its social side, is the Feast of Good-Will. The angels' "Merry Christmas" to the Bethlehem Shepherds proclaimed peace on earth to men of good-will; and good-will, under God's blessing and to His glory, is a necessary condition of real peace. It profits little that the great guns no longer thunder defiance, and that destruction does not rain down from the skies, if we are to be at enmity among ourselves, suspicious, jealous, hateful, and hated. We must wish each other well, in the fellowship of community, and try to increase the common welfare by doing our duty bravely, honestly, and merrily. Brooding over old wrongs is worse than useless; constant suspicion of others poisons all. To give brotherly trust is the best way of assuring that we shall receive it and be worthy of it. That is good religion and good common sense. We can do more for ourselves as well as for one another when we work together, loving as brothers. The apostles of hate have no place in any commonwealth. In the presence of a new-born Babe who can preach destruction? Civilization dates a new era from the birth of a Jewish Baby, nineteen centuries ago, because that Child of Mary is the Incarnation of love. From His manger-cradle He preaches good-will. That will be a new era in business of every sort, when all who work together in the creation of values shall have good-will as their motive force, and shall rejoice together as they participate in the fruits of their common labour. God send us His peace this Christmas-tide, that America may lead the Nations of mankind toward Brotherhood, accomplished under the Fatherhood of God.

"A Christmas Message" was written by Dr. William Harman van Allen, Rector of The Church of the Advent (Boston), and a lecturer of international fame.

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